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# INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Meeting of Zonal Executive  
Committee of the CDU

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The statements made at this meeting by the various participants are reproduced here in some detail because the trend of the remarks points up the frank dependence on cues from the SED for the formation of party policy. The proceedings also reveal the extent of inner-party bickering and distrust and the utter futility of the entire East CDU.

1. Otto Mueschke called the meeting to order and then stated that the guests of Land representatives could remain present only if the Land delegations would vouch for their reliability and if each person would promise not to give the Western press any information about the meeting. He then described in detail the burial of Father Kirsch, whom he held up as a symbol of the people's faith in the CDU. Mueschke then sketched the present situation and demanded that his party go into the camp of the "peace-lovers" and that there be an end to the policy of wavering. The peace front was led by the Soviet Union, which would have justified doubts about the sincerity of CDU policy if the party did not subscribe unconditionally to the Leipzig decisions. Mueschke characterized as important the demand of the DDR that the Germans fighting with the French Foreign Legion, supposedly about 250,000 in number, desert to the "friends of peace" in Vietnam. He declared that the statement given out by the Policy Committee of the CDU did not mean a new course of action but simply had been released as a consequence of the Leipzig decisions, since doubts existed about the sincerity of the desires of the party. He stated that he had spoken out plainly at the bloc meeting and that he had told President Pieck that he was obliged to draw the line at present methods. Mueschke stated that he discussed economic matters during his stay in Sofia. The Bulgars told him that they need German geologists, professors, and engineers. Mueschke then attacked the federal republic because it was making little effort towards regaining national unity. Developments in the East must be more closely observed, and Germans must learn to think in terms of continents. It was the goal of the DDR to do away with food rationing except for meat and

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fats after the next harvest. In the DDR this would be accomplished independently, whereas in the Federal Republic it had been possible only through millions of marks in loans. He declared that the USSR would make no further demands for old locomotives as reparation payments, which was another sign of Soviet cooperation. He discussed the incident in Oranienburg occasioned by the birthday celebration for Delegate Reichert. When a group of workers occupied the hall two hours before the ceremonies began, he addressed them, asking to know how they could reconcile absenteeism and waste of gasoline with the fulfillment of the economic plan. It was the duty of the CDU to find the basis for its existence in the constitution, which guaranteed the rights of churches. He would see to it that there was no infringement of these rights. Since the dissolution of the council of elders was unconstitutional, he would protest. The western press had published Cardinal Preysing's letter without the latter's knowledge. Nuschke stated that he would make an effort to meet the desires of the church and had passed the letter to the responsible authorities for action. The Christmas services in Sachsenhausen and Probst Gruber's statements were largely to thank for the final disbanding of the internment camps. Nuschke declared that he supported a sincere bloc policy, although he admitted that philosophical differences existed between the parties. The watchword coming from the bloc meeting was unconditional cooperation. The CDU had the historical mission of preserving the peace for the nation and fighting for national unity.

2. Emil Fischer, Halle, responded since he stated that he felt himself addressed by Nuschke's remarks. His statements in Potsdam had been checked over before delivery by the Landesverband (party organization at Land level), hence he could see no reason for reproach on that score. Quotations had been cited out of context. The matter of the speech had been discussed in a four-hour bloc session in Halle and it was decided in the end to leave final decision on the matter to the CDU executive committee of the Land (Landesvorstand). The attack which CDU Deputy Fuchs made against him should not be regarded as relevant since it did not come from the SED but from an ex-party man who had, incidentally, become involved in a graft scandal. He stated that he regretted the misunderstanding caused by his remarks at Potsdam, but that no one could claim that he was hypocritical. He cited details of his political activities, and stated the belief that the way in which the SED was now going forward was not the way in which to build up the National Front. Cooperation can only exist when there is tolerance. The policy of the Western CDU was wrong, but in fighting this policy one should not go wrong oneself. His attitude towards the USSR had always been positive, and in Western Germany he had never failed to support public discussion of this attitude.
3. Rev. Helmuth Mehnert, Lobau, called for close cooperation with the SED in the bloc. History cannot be turned back. All must be ready for sincere cooperation so that no recriminations can be made. All efforts must be bent towards establishing a sincere friendship with the USSR.
4. August Bach of Weimar spoke for the Thuringian Landesverband in stating that the events of the past week could have been avoided if the party leaders on the central committee had straightened matters out on their own at an earlier date. He came out against the policy committee in its present form, saying that it offered no guarantee for better work in the

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future. The decisions of one week past had not been satisfactory. A spade should be called a spade, and the leaders must have the courage to clear the atmosphere. Nuschke must say more than has been the case in the past.

5. Franz Reczick, representative of the workers in the Saxony-Anhalt CDU, said that the organization of party groups within factories was going forward.
6. Otto Freitag of Dresden objected to Bach's statements and called for plain speaking. One should naturally have the courage to learn from this experience and only a fool would want to do away with the reforms, but he refused to have a part in political deals and asked that Hickmann be given the opportunity to find the right road. Even the SED thought that people who were political fence-sitters were suitable material for the National Front. The same rule should apply to the CDU. Whoever cannot abide by the decisions of the policy committee should go. The friendly handshake exchanged between Nuschke and Hickmann at Fr. Kirsch's funeral had been politically symbolical for many. The central committee must make the party line clear. "War and peace are in the balance. The policy of neutrality must be opposed. The CDU stands on the side of the forces of peace. Freitag attested to his belief in socialism. He warned that it must be expected that perhaps other party leaders would fall.
7. Arnold Gohr, chairman of the Berlin Landesvorstand, declared that he had seen the present developments coming since the CDU had strayed from its program as laid down in July 1945. The crisis Kaiser had created had never been dispelled with radical enough action. He asked that all local groups study the theses of the Berlin Landesverband as well as the declaration of the policy committee. Walther Rücker's article which appeared in the Thuringian press should also be given attention.
8. Karl Grobbel, chairman of the Brandenburg Landesverband, spoke of the difficult position of his organization. It was exceptionally difficult to make his membership accept the Oder-Neisse line, and for this reason he welcomed the declaration of the policy committee. The explanation for cooperation between the CSU and the CDU which Jakob Kaiser gave on the radio had been a blow for his organization. He asked that progressives be given more prominence and mentioned in this connection the name of Landrat Gerlich of Ost-Priegnitz. Grobbel stated that he was exerting an effort to make his organization progressive and he would like everyone to be aware of that fact. Much trouble was caused by RIAS propaganda which called for people to refuse to do what the SED wanted. There is the need for much enlightenment to prevent friends of the party from becoming tools of foreign interests.
9. Schmidt, land secretary from Weimar, called for plain talk. The blame for what had happened should be placed on the CDU rather than the SED since the CDU party line had failed to influence every party member. Ever since Erfurt, a gap has existed between the spokesmen of the party and the rank and file. The shake-up necessary to the party will require reorientation affecting the lowest ranks of the party. The infection in the party must be scotched. All members must be brought around to the viewpoint represented by the Leipzig decisions.

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10. Minister Steidle reproached the party for not having analysed the Leipzig decisions properly. The daily press must be used more and more for enlightenment. It happened too often that the economy was betrayed as, for example, by the responsible parties on the island of Riem. He asked for better personnel so that the party's program can be carried out. It had been apparent that some party speakers had not always been sure of themselves. The press had recently published four advertisements from Western firms. Party discipline must become more strict, and the wrong tone should be avoided in committee discussions, as, for example, in debating the workers' protective act. Party leaders must find the courage to command. Steidle expressed astonishment that Grobbel had brought up the Oder-Neisse line again. Such people should have asked for the floor in Leipzig. (Shouts: It wasn't permitted!) Adenauer's attitude was to be condemned. A definitive stand must be taken for Soviet-German friendship. It was too bad that the Neue Zeit had missed the opportunity to give immediate answer to an article in the Telegraf which had branded Stalin a war criminal. Steidle claimed that he had continual difficulties as minister because the Democratic Women's Union asserted that CDU women did not cooperate. The world is verging on war, and therefore the struggle for peace must be all the more vigorous.
11. Georg Dertinger stated that the exchange of views had cleared the atmosphere, but more attention must be given to a clarification of the party's decisions and to the case of Hickmann, Schwob, Witte and others. To get and keep the right sort of people in the party was the problem of the future. Emphasis on the elections was misguided. Although the West is increasing its war propaganda, the party had failed to sift out its leaders until it was too late. Side-stepping of the issues could no longer be excused. The responsibility for inner-party corruption lies with Jakob Kaiser, who particularly in the recent past has succeeded in causing confusion among the rank and file. Muschke remains too reserved in his approach. Since the proper steps were not taken in time, the pressure of the mob had recently been necessary to bring action. The Hickmann incident had certainly not been engineered with any ulterior motives but had been dramatized because of the world situation. The Soviet Control Commission could not be blamed for not trusting the CDU. It is the task of the party, now at the last moment, to step in and act in a Christian Democratic way. The Christian West had two million unemployed, pornographic literature, and a foreign legion. All must admit that the East German "savages" are better Christians. The will of the working class exerted pressure in the case of Hickmann. A weeding out of the membership of the Landesverbände should bring a much more vigorous stand on issues.
12. Fried of Berlin called for a clearer statement of policy. There should be no real surprise at the current predicament of the party since the party's stand against Adenauer and Kaiser had up to this time not been clear enough. Since 1919 Adenauer's policy had been separatism. Kaiser's policy of last-ditch defense could only have dangerous consequences.
13. Walther Rucker of Erfurt called attention to the fact that the Thuringian Landesverband could not agree to any attempts to justify Hickmann's choice of personnel. Thuringia refused to accept his actions as well as his political opinions. The SED had a perfect right to intervene. Dertinger maintains that Hickmann might be retained; this was wrong. He may esteem him personally, but he must fight him politically. Freitag and Jentsch were involved in intrigues which would

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get the party into similar difficulties in another four weeks. That Freitag had said today could not be taken seriously.

14. Reinhold Lobedan likewise called for a clearly defined membership policy and expressed the opinion that Witte could not be retained much longer.
15. Dertinger asked for the floor and called for a clarification of Rücker's remarks. He wished to know if they should be construed as a statement of lack of confidence in zonal leadership.
16. Rücker declared that the remarks were not meant this way.
17. Frau Schäfer of Berlin called for a well-defined stand on mass organizations and the Democratic Women's Union.
18. Wilhelm Bacher welcomed Fascher's statements and expressed the hope that he would take the same stand in public. He demanded that the executive committees of the Länder purge themselves at their next elections. The decision must be made to change the character of the party's membership even if it meant that many would drop out in the future. The outside influence on party affairs was justified. The CDU should see the point of what has happened. Those who don't belong in the party should get out. Whoever doesn't pay his dues must be regarded as politically unreliable. Those who fail to pay dues must be expelled. It would be better to have 22,000 than 220,000 members if those who remain are united by common conviction. The gap between leadership and members must be closed. Rohner had been a disappointment and the SED was not to blame if it showed itself mistrustful. He demanded that every officeholder in the party be submitted to scrutiny. The functionaries who do not meet requirements should be expelled from the party. There are plenty of progressives in the CDU, but they must have more to say for themselves.
19. Freitag of Saxony objected to Rücker's remarks in which he was charged with political intrigue. Freitag stated that, like Hickmann, he must raise the question of whether he had the party's confidence.
20. Rücker expressed the opinion that Freitag and Jentsch should be given the same treatment as Hickmann.
21. Nuschke stated that Freitag's case was a matter for clarification by the policy committee. With regard to Rohner, he said that the man was one of the founders of the CDU. He regretted Rohner's decision to leave the party. He then read a letter from Rohner in which the latter stated that he could not be expected to stay in the party since they spat at his wife in Oranienburg, struck down his daughter, and excluded his son from the state examinations. Nuschke expressed the hope that the differences arising from the Hickmann case could be ironed out. Hickmann could not have remained in the party since Pieck had said that it was a political necessity for him to disappear from the political scene. Nuschke insisted that the board of examination for Hickmann's case was necessary since it is impossible to pass judgment simply on the basis of a remark. Recently a high functionary of the Thuringian Landesverband had exceeded his leave by eight days and the Landesverband had

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asked Muschke to exrel him. On this occasion Muschke had also said that a check must first be made and consequently did not put through the order for extrulsion. The man in question was Attker. (Boars of laughter.)

22. Rucker declared that he would not recognize the policy committee until Steidle and Genter-Gilmans were elected to it.
23. Frau Schäfer of Berlin complained that her motion on mass organizations had not come up for consideration.
24. Muschke maintained that this motion had not been submitted in writing, but that the policy committee would nevertheless concern itself with the matter.
25. Wehnert objected that an artificial crisis had been created in the CDU as a result of the various Landesverbände expressing lack of confidence in each other.
26. A public statement was then read and approved, and the case of Freitag was turned over to the policy committee for decision.

25X1X [REDACTED] Comment: As a result of this meeting, members of the CDU central committee have been left with a very poor impression of their party leaders on Land level. It was apparent that the Land chairmen who attended the meeting indulge in the same form of self-criticism and self-debasement associated with the SED and Communist parties. This all-zone meeting, particularly the last part of it, had the flavor of a small-time Communist gathering at which the participants vilify each other with personal insults. Events in the zone are at present happening so quickly that there were participants present, such as Rüdiger of Leipzig, who, without their knowledge, had been expelled from the party on the previous day.

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